

criteria previously described it must meet or exceed the leakage rate of $\leq 6\%$ of fan flow.

If the new ducts are an extension of an existing duct system the combined system (new and existing ducts) must meet:

- A leakage rate of $< 15\%$ of fan flow, or
- A reduction in leakage rate of $\geq 60\%$ (as compared to the existing ductwork) with all “accessible” leaks demonstrated through visual inspection to have been sealed, or
- All accessible leaks shall be sealed and verified through a visual inspection by a certified HERS rater.

There is an exception for ducts that are connected to existing ducts with asbestos insulation or sealant.

These requirements also apply to cases where existing HVAC equipment is either repaired or replaced. With exceptions for ducts that are insulated or sealed with asbestos and an existing duct system that has previously been leakage tested by a certified California HERS rater (see <http://www.energy.ca.gov/HERS/>).

One can avoid sealing the ducts by insulating the roof and sealing the attic vents as part of a larger remodel, thereby creating a conditioned space within which the ducts are located, and no longer meets the criteria of §144 k.

Another alternative to duct sealing is to install a high efficiency air conditioner that will save as much energy as the duct system is losing through leaks. This trade-off can be calculated using the performance software or by using pre-calculated equipment efficiencies deemed comparable to duct sealing. In climate zones 1-15, systems with air conditioner efficiencies at least as high as those in Table 4-5 are deemed equivalent to duct sealing.

Section 4.4.3 describes mandated acceptance test requirements for ductwork.